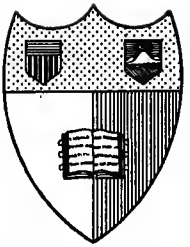

GERMANY
IN THE WAR AND AFTER

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GERMANY
IN THE WAR AND AFTER

BY

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New York

THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

1919

Set up and electrotyped. Published, July, 1919

PREFACE

With the external manifestations of Germany during the war and since the Armistice the world is familiar. But with what was going on inside that extraordinary country, among those extraordinary people, during the war and immediately after it, the world is less familiar.

It has been my privilege and necessity in the course of my duties since May, 1915, up to the present time, in connection with the work of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, the United States Food Administration, and the American Relief Administration, all under the directorship of Herbert Hoover, to have some rather close personal acquaintanceship with Germans and German conditions during all of that time.

The present opportunity is given me to bring together and expose whatever of my knowledge seems pertinent to the need of us all to understand as well as we can the war-time and post-

war experience and situation and the probable future behavior and possibilities of Germany.

My thanks are given to my friend, Mr. Ellery Sedgwick, editor of the *Atlantic Monthly*, for permission to use in this book whatever I care to from a recent paper published in his magazine.

V. K.

New York City,
July, 1919.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

All the chapters in this book except the last one were written after the Armistice but before the signing of the Treaty. The last one was written immediately after the Treaty was signed.

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GERMANY IN THE WAR AND AFTER

CHAPTER I

A POST-MORTEM: THE GERMAN ARMY

A POST-MORTEM examination of the patient often reveals the cause, or causes, before that only imperfectly understood, of the fatal illness. Of course, sometimes it does not. The case of the collapse of militaristic Germanism is one that urgently calls for examination after the event. We need to find out, for the sake of knowing what not to do or be, as much as we can of what imperial Germany did or was that brought her to a timely end.

There may be some who will remonstrate that this end has not come yet, and that a present post-mortem examination of Germany is premature. In all truth, imperial Germany is not wholly dead. But sometimes, for that matter, neither is the more

usual subject of a post-mortem wholly dead at the time of the examination. The human body does not all die at one moment; it dies by parts, by organs, by tissues, one after another. For example, the amœboid white blood corpuscles, the most independent parts of the body, go on moving and functioning long after the heart has stopped beating. The army was the heart of premortem Germany. It has stopped beating. And it is revealing some curious phenomena in the course of its decomposition.

Hauptmann Graf W. had been my escort officer at German Great Headquarters in Charleville in 1915 and 1916. It was he who had been the one, as described in an earlier book,[1] to break in on my attempt to explain one night at dinner, on his invitation, to a group of Headquarters officers just what it is that America understands by democracy. I had proceeded but a little way in my explanation when he interrupted, rather violently, with the exclamation: "Democracy — bah — license, lawlessness, anarchy." On his hurried way from Charleville to Germany after the Armistice he passed through Brussels and

[1] Headquarters Nights, 1918, *Atlantic Monthly Press.*

talked with one of our C.R.B. (Commission for Relief in Belgium) men.

He was still boasting — entirely characteristic of him — but it was a strange, new boast he uttered. Always, at Headquarters, and in our long motor journeys over Occupied France on relief business, in enforced companionship, he had upheld against me the great advantage, nay, the absolute necessity, if a people was to be well governed and successful, of a military autocracy. If America wished to be great, or if she had for the moment the seeming of greatness but wished to assure the continuance of this greatness, she should acquire as soon as possible a Kaiser and General Staff. Germany was the greatest nation in the world because it enjoyed just these particular blessings; of course, incidentally its people, its Kultur, etc., etc., were the best, etc., etc., *ad nauseam*.

But Hauptmann Graf W. had learned, surprisingly quickly, a new boast. Germany was now really going to be the greatest nation because she had got a splendid new government, a real democratic government, not a pseudo-democracy like America's, where the President was more of an

autocrat than any King or Kaiser in Europe, but the most real thing in democracies conceivable.

My astonished C.R.B. friend stammered out a question. "Do all the officers at Great Headquarters and all the other officers say this, too? Do they all think as you do?"

"No, not all; some are fools. But sixty per cent. of them do; and the other forty per cent.—well, they don't count."

This seems hard to understand. But I know the Hauptmann Graf W. very well, and many others like him. It was the acceptance of authority, the cringing to power. The Kaiser had run away; so had some of the General Staff; the others were rapidly changing their clothes, doffing uniforms for mufti. The "real democracy" was in power; hence, knuckle down to it. This is not to say that there are no Germans who believe in democracy and want it. Only the Hauptmann Graf W. is not one of them. He accepts the real democracy — if it can give the orders.

Some of the leading German officers and officials in Belgium, men of the Governor-General's staff, gave an edifying exhibition in Brussels shortly before scurrying away. The German sol-

diers, at the suggestion and with the moral support of a group of soldier-council emissaries from Hamburg and Berlin, took control of the army in most of Belgium on the day before the Armistice. The insignia of rank were stripped from the officers' uniforms, or the officers were ordered to strip themselves of their insignia, which they did, and a *Soldaten-Rath* was established in Brussels under the leadership of Private Einstein. This council requested the attendance at one of its meetings of half a dozen of the highest German officers and officials in the city, men who had been the rulers of Belgium for fours years, whose word had meant life or death to German soldiers and Belgian civilians up to this very moment. They came to the meeting. They came early. They were there before Einstein arrived. When he came in they rose from their chairs and stood respectfully until he was seated.

Amazing? It was beyond words. I can hardly write this. It is too good to be true. Yet it is the truth. These were the men who had shot Miss Cavell and scores of the fearless Belgians; the men who had brutalized thousands of German soldiers; the men who had insulted, times

Missing Page

done? And would Baron von der L., chief political adviser of the successive Governors-General of Belgium, and a widely known figure in German diplomacy and official intrigue, do that other thing? The humble servants of Private Einstein assured him that they would.

Is this credible? It happened.

In the few days after that meeting these men disappeared from Belgium. They slunk away in concealing civilian clothes to Holland or Germany. Haughty Rupprecht, crown prince of Bavaria, escaping the bullets shot into his house, took refuge in the Spanish Legation, whence he was taken under the Spanish flag to the Dutch frontier.

A few officers not so high in rank and not so easily convinced of the advantage of the new democracy — some of the foolish forty per cent. perhaps — resisted feebly. They continued to wear their uniforms and insignia and tried to give orders to their men. Some of them were shot, and others shot at. From the Palace Hotel, former convivial headquarters of German officers back from the front on leave in Brussels, and now taken possession of by the soldiers, a machine gun spat bullets across the square into the windows of the

Cosmopolite, last hold-out of the recalcitrant officers. The soldiers, the soldier-councils, were giving the rulers of Germany their first lesson in the "splendid new democracy."

It is apparently not necessary to observe — which, nevertheless, I do here parenthetically — that this is not exactly our idea of democracy, for the officers had no representation in it. It was dictatorship, just as the former autocracy was dictatorship. The rule of the proletariat alone is no more democratic than is the rule of the nobles alone. Bolshevism is not democracy. It is the exchange of the tyranny of Kings and Nobles and General Staffs for the tyranny of the bottom rung in the political and social ladder. Russia illustrates this now; Germany will illustrate it to-morrow if the Spartacists have their way.

But to return from the parenthesis. One other Brussels happening must be recorded. It is the departure of the German occupying troops.

On "Liberation Sunday" (November 17th) my wife watched for three hours from a curtained window on the Boulevard du Regent that strange procession of beaten conquerors passing by, the last crazy caravan of mixed German soldiers,

seized Belgian cattle and looted Belgian household belongings piled high on gun carriages, munition wagons, passenger hacks and hucksters' carts, moving east. The significant thing to me about this procession — in special connection with the point I am laboring — is that despite the uprising of the soldiers and degradation of the officers during the last week before the evacuation, when the troops moved away — with their final loot — they were led and kept in line by officers! It was the effect of long tradition and ingrained habit reasserting itself. In taking up familiar performance again the soldiers needed, or thought they did, or just accepted without need or thought, some kind of control. They wanted somebody over them, somebody to rely on, some one to order them; they wanted to be reassured by the familiar bark. Which has its significance to be considered, it seems to me, in any attempts to estimate just how rapidly democracy will really come to its own in new Germany.

CHAPTER II

GERMAN CONTROL OF GERMANS

At the time of this writing Noske, minister of national defense, is the strong man of the Majority Socialist administration of Germany and the man on whom chiefly depends the hope of a continuing orderly or semi-orderly government. By the time this is published he may not be; before then he may be assassinated; he almost certainly will be if the Spartacists can get to him. But now he is the strength of the Government. Why? Because, although he is a socialist and man risen from the ranks, he uses the control methods of the old régime. He wields the Big Stick; he controls by force. The Germans understand his ways. He orders them, and sends troops to enforce his orders. The Ebert-Scheidemann *bloc* has a large majority in the National Assembly, and the majority socialists have a larger number of voters than any other German party, but this alone is not sufficient to give them control. They

must have a Noske and the Noske method of prevailing upon the people to accept their decrees. The splendid new democracy will do very well, and Hauptmann Graf W. and his kind will see its reasonableness and advantage — as long as it can give, and enforce, its orders.

The way to control Germans and Germany, to make decrees valid, to make promises and agreements binding, to make treaties sacred, is by force. At least, this is the way until the New Day really comes in Germany. This the French know very well and this is why France goes panicky to-day when she sees, or thinks she sees, any signs of any releasing of the grip that the world has on Germany. The attainment of the present moment has cost her such sacrifice, and so weakened her — despite her great success — that any surrender of control spells danger and horror to her. The Great Menace is removed; it must never, never return. That is the dictating note in all of the international politics of France to-day.

But Germany is more broken than France seems to realize. Perhaps I can even say, she is more changed. Anyway for a strong nation to be broken is to be changed. When our first food

mission to Poland reached the Swiss-Austrian frontier in January, we looked for possible trouble from the Austrian border officials with regard to our passports and papers and the numerous bags and boxes which contained our food and special traveling conveniences. But no Austrian officials appeared to look at our papers or examine our baggage. When, made bolder by this, we demanded that somebody stamp our passports as seen, so that any later inspection by the police in Vienna or in passing out through the northern Austrian frontier might not lead to trouble for lack of these visés, we were told by representatives of a *Soldaten-Rath:* "We are a republic now; anybody can come and go; any goods can come and go; you don't need any papers; we don't want to look at anything." To be sure this was Austria, not Germany; but it was in a land of German ways. And it was a great change from other days.

I cannot put into words the profound impression of brokenness that Vienna and the Viennese make on one. Some reports have come to America that the Vienna Opera is still open, that the

cafés are full in the afternoons. This is true. People in prolonged times of distress go on with many of their traditional habits if they can. All through the German occupation of Brussels the people, at any rate the little people, crowded the cinemas and cafés. There was not much in the cafés to eat or drink, the coffee was not coffee, the cakes were coarse war bread. But the people came and sat in their accustomed places, and looked over the German-censored newspapers, entirely disbelieving what they read, and exchanged in whispers the latest underground news or rumors.

So in Vienna the common people by force of habit and for the lack of better to do, crowd the cafés; and they go to their beloved opera on the few nights that the city can spare coal and lighting for it. But, in fact, Vienna, "*die lustige, schöne Stadt Wien,*" is the most depressed and depressing great city of Europe that I have seen. Its people show a fatal apathy, broken, with no initiative to help themselves, waiting for some one to come to their aid, and apparently hopeless of that. It is really horrible. This, at least,

is my impression of Vienna as I saw it at various times in January, February and March of this year.

Brussels in the darkest days of her four years' isolation and martyrdom was never like this. Warsaw in November, 1915, when I saw her soon after the iron hand of von Beseler had closed on her, nor in January of this year when I first saw her again after she had been released and was struggling all unaided to find herself, with her country without food or clothing, without work for her workmen, without stable government, without recognition and trying to fight on three fronts against Bolshevists, Ruthenians and Germans — Warsaw was not like this.

And, finally, a great difference is apparent in Germany itself. Perhaps we cannot say that Germany is broken as one can certainly say of Austria, but if the French could see more of the interior of Germany, see Berlin, Munich, Leipzig, Hamburg and Frankfort, see the kind and quantity and quality of the food the Germans have to live on, see the clothing and shoes they have to wear, see the type of men at her head that she has to depend on for guidance and control, see the

extraordinary difference between the little almost unrelated groups of voluntary soldiers under officer adventurers that she has chiefly to depend on as army to quell her food and labor riots and preserve her from Spartacist uprisings, as compared with that terrible machine of precision and power that swept through Belgium and into France in 1914 and held these ravaged lands through all those long years until the debacle came — if more of the French could see more of all this, they would be less panic-stricken in their fear of a possible swift recuperation of imperial Germany and an overpowering German army.

From my hotel window in Berlin in February I used to watch almost each day the march past down Wilhelmstrasse of the guard, at noon, on its way to relieve the morning squad at the Chancellor's palace. The band played well, but the soldiers marched poorly. People of the street walked along beside them and chatted with them; urchins ran through the column; the leaders and side guides were men from the ranks. Few officers' uniforms were seen on the streets; they were not healthful clothes to wear. We saw a good deal of a Major von S., attached to the Foreign

Office. He arranged most of our food conferences with the government officials for us. When we saw him in his own rooms he wore his uniform with the broad red Staff stripe down the trousers; when we saw him in other offices or on the street he was in mufti. The insolent Prussian officer no longer lords it down Unter den Linden; his uniform and saber are tabu; he, himself, in mufti, is unrecognizable, and glad, for his health's sake, to be so.

All over Berlin are placards signed by Major X. or Oberst Z. calling on men who wish to be soldiers to enroll themselves with me, to join my crowd. You will be lodged, fed and paid by the Government and commanded by me. There is something in it for all of us.

These are the *freiwillige* bands that largely compose the German army of to-day; almost independent groups, loosely disciplined with the German counterparts of the old Italian *condottiere* to lead them; these are the "*Regiment Gerstenberg*," "*Regiment Reinhardt*," "*Regiment Oefen*," that one reads of in the newspapers as appearing here and there where trouble rises to machine-gun the illegal food-sellers, the "*Wild-*

Haendler," of the Moabit, or the Spartacist rioters in Hamburg, Halle, or Leipzig. They do not compose an overpowering German army, nor are they likely to. To be sure one of these *condottiere* may turn out to be a man of magnetism and ambition; he might possibly gather round him many of these groups and tie them together; he might, possibly, become a military dictator. It is a contingency to reckon with. But it is a remote contingency.

There has been an impressive and dangerous break-down of governmental control in Germany since the debacle of the imperial government and army, a break-down to be expected, but to be reckoned with in all considerations of German possibilities. Street crimes, petty robbery, hold-ups, illegal food-selling, disregard of the old Verbotens that so strictly and minutely controlled the personal life of the Germans, all of these go on openly and winked at by military and police officials.

The break-down in food-control has upset all governmental calculations and attempts to make the food supply last out until the next harvest. Many reports have come to America from our

soldiers and our visitors along the Rhine, of the plentiful supply of food available in Germany. They really mean to speak of the plentiful supply available in the territory occupied by the Allies. Food flows toward occupying armies. The very abundance of food along the Rhine means a more serious shortage elsewhere than would otherwise exist. And that shortage exists all over the rest of Germany. In the best hotels of Berlin, Munich and Leipzig I really suffered from the insufficiency, the monotony and the poor quality of the food. I came out of Germany after only a few weeks' stay there hungry and upset in my insides. One simply cannot live in health on coarse fish and the products of a laboratory of organic chemistry. That was the chief content of the Berlin menu.

Without the importation of the foodstuffs now being effected through the permission and by the provision of the Allies, Germany could not possibly keep its people alive until autumn. This food is, of course, being paid for by the Germans; it is not being given them. The shipping that brings the food from overseas is German shipping. The food relief of Germany and Austria is a commer-

cial transaction, not a dole. The "relief" consists in the permission to have food, and a certain assistance in making it available. But it is a most important, an imperatively necessary, relief. It keeps the people from starvation and it aids the Germans to control themselves. Without it there would be anarchy; even with it, anarchy is an ever-present possibility.

CHAPTER III

WHAT THE BLOCKADE DID TO FOOD

UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE VON BRAUN once made a notable little speech during the war in which he presented to the Reichstag — and, incidentally, to the German people and the world — the irrefutable facts which proved that Germany could not be starved into a break-down, that if the Allies were counting on the blockade and the food and raw materials shortage to win the war they were doomed to bitter disappointment, and, finally, that if the Allies did not make an early peace with Germany something awful would soon happen to them.

The second official interview that Dr. Taylor and I, representing Mr. Hoover and the United States Food Administration, had in Berlin in February was with Under Secretary of State von Braun. On this occasion he made us a notable little speech in which he presented the irrefutable facts which proved that Germany's break-down

was due practically entirely to her shortage in food and raw materials, and that unless something were done quickly to relieve the terrible situation in which Germany now found herself she would simply explode into revolution and Bolshevist anarchy, and the Allies would have to face the awful something that such a catastrophe in mid-Europe would entail.

This illustrates one of the difficulties that faced those who attempted to learn anything about Germany's condition before the debacle by listening to German declarations about it, and that faces those to-day who would try to know something of Germany's present condition by taking a German official's word for it. Official lying seems to be the great German national sport. Under Secretary of State von Braun lied to the German people and the world when he made his Reichstag speech. But that has little importance for us now. What does have importance is, how much are he and the others lying now when they pretend to reveal in all candor the German situation that must largely determine the attitude and action that the Allies and America have to take toward Germany now and for some time to come.

With regard to this I may say at once that I think Under Secretary von Braun lied less to us in Berlin in February than he lied to the German people and the world during the war. We have certain extrinsic proofs of this.

There is no doubt that the blockade did effective things to Germany, especially from the early part of 1917 on, that is, since America came into the war. By our action toward the neutral states contiguous to Germany we helped tighten up the blockade to the real pinching point.

Some of these effective things have been revealed since Armistice Day. They can be expressed in figures; to begin with, certain German official figures. This, of course, puts the presumption strongly against them. But, strangely, they are confirmed by certain German figures which we have been able to get unofficially. In addition, the American War Trade Board, the American military and naval intelligence services and our diplomatic representatives in those neutral countries nearest to Germany and most actively in commercial relations with her during the war were able to obtain information which was not only of important use during the war but is

now very serviceable in checking up the figures that the German Government is presenting to make out its case of present need and its plea for practical pity. With these figures in our hands, Dr. Taylor and I were able to ask pertinent questions of the Berlin officials and to correct these officials whenever they seemed inclined to dash off into the national official sport that I have referred to by the ugly word.

Also certain testimony for the figures is apparent to the eye in Germany to-day. These things seen on the streets are less amenable to expression in figures but they have a real value in connection with any statistical considerations. They reveal something of the likelihood or unlikelihood of that which the figures purport to prove.

For example, one sees fewer strongly convex Germans now than in the old days. This is an obvious fact that helps to give reality to the otherwise bald and unillustrated statistical statements concerning shortages in meat and fats and bread and beer. Wooden collars and cuffs, paper shirts and skirts and shoes with wooden soles and cloth or paper uppers are not articles that one chooses to wear when textiles and leather are plentiful.

But Germans wear them. Nor do the principal hotels of Berlin, Munich and Leipzig use paper tablecloths and napkins and laboratory-made food by predilection or for economy's sake alone. The other kinds are simply too scarce.

But after all we must have recourse to figures to make the war-time situation really apparent. Let us begin with meat and fats which the blockade, according to von Braun's Reichstag speech, was not hitting very hard, and anyway, if it was, was not doing much harm to because of the sufficiency of home production. What is the story to-day of the facts of yesterday?

The Germans are willing, nay, anxious, to admit that while before the war not less than 900,000 tons a year of meats and animal fats were imported directly or produced by imported concentrated foodstuffs, the 1917 importations of animal fats were only 5,000 tons and the 1918 (first ten months) only 2,000 tons, while the importation of concentrated feeding stuffs for the animals was cut to one-one-hundredth of the pre-war figures. And as a consequence of this effect of the blockade and of other meat-limiting conditions the German meat ration during the months just preceding the

Armistice was on the average only 135 grams (4¾ oz.) per head per week for the city populations, which is just about one-eighth of the average pre-war consumption. Also this meat was much inferior to the pre-war meat, and the substitute protein-supplying eggs and fish were not available to take its place. The meat-hungry people raided the game preserves of the Kaiser, and even captured and ate those familiar and famous Berlin swans that used to paddle so pridefully and Prussianly on the Spree and Havel.

While the pre-war average annual German consumption of eggs amounted to 425,000 tons, of which 40 per cent. were imported, the war-time use of eggs was reduced to an amazing degree. In 1917 the imports of eggs amounted to but 40,000 tons (instead of the pre-war annual average of 170,000 tons) and in 1918 (first ten months) to but 17,250 tons. Also because many hens were killed on account of the shortage of meat, and there was little grain available to feed the ones left alive, the native production of eggs was much reduced. In Berlin for several months before the Armistice there was but one egg a month available per head of the population.

As to fish, the figures tell a similarly sad story. While of the pre-war average annual fish consumption of 577,000 tons, importations were relied on to the extent of about 361,000 tons, these imports were cut in 1917 to 161,000 tons and 1918 (first ten months) to 97,830 tons. Also the native fish catch was greatly lessened.

Coupled with this shortage in meat, eggs and fish was the shortage in butter. During the last months before the Armistice the quantity of butter available in Berlin per week was not more than that which had been available per day before the war. And there was but little vegetable oil and fat to make up for the lack in animal fats. There was practically a total stoppage of the importations which before the war had provided over 82 per cent. of the 188,500 tons of vegetable oils and fats annually used. Of the 1,600,000 tons of oleaginous fruits and seeds annually imported in pre-war time, but little more than one-one-hundredth could be imported in 1917.

Finally, in this group of protein-carrying and fatty foods, milk demands a special paragraph. Germany was in the unfortunate position of depending for the production of nearly one-half its

milk on imported concentrated foodstuffs. As already stated, the blockade played havoc with these importations. The annual average of 5,180,000 tons for the years 1912 and 1913 was reduced to 59,000 tons in 1917 and to 41,000 tons for the first ten months of 1918. The absolute minimum milk requirements for Germany are estimated at one and three-fourths million liters; in the last year of the war there were not more than one and one-fourth million liters available.

All this frightful shortage in meats and animal fats made Germany in war time, perforce, a land of vegetarians. But rice, after the stocks existing at the beginning of the war were used up, was practically totally lacking. The importation of dried legumes was cut from an annual pre-war average of 310,800 tons to 1,708 tons in 1917. So on bread and potatoes fell the burden of keeping the German people alive through the war. And they had a thankless task of it.

In the first place there was not enough of them; in the second place, sometimes the potatoes and always the bread were of poor quality. The necessity of "stretching" the grain by milling it at a high percentage — going from the usual 70 per

cent. first to 72 per cent., then 75 per cent., then 80 per cent., then 82 per cent., and in the last year of the war to 94 per cent.! — and by mixing with this high extraction wheat and rye flour other meals such as potato, bean, pea, barley, oat, and turnip meal, together with finely ground bran, resulted in a bread almost unedible for many. Even starving people can balk at turnip bread. It was indeed the terrible *"Kohl-Rüben Zeit"* (Epoch of Turnips) of late 1916 and early 1917 that did more to unsettle the German confidence in such speeches as von Braun's than anything else. It is from that time, when, in the face of a failure in the potato crop of 1916, it was necessary to have recourse to the abundant supply of turnips to replace lacking potatoes and when these turnips were also used as substitutes for many other foods, even to the extent of making turnip marmalade and turnip coffee, that the increase in mortality and morbidity among the German civil population appears. Which introduces us to a new set of figures, German official figures, it must be confessed, which we are not in a position at present to check up as effectively as we can the figures of reduced importations. Indeed we must wish, for

humanity's sake, that they are, as they probably really are, exaggerated.

In the first place, the malnutrition of the people had as consequence a marked reduction in weight. Statistics collected from all towns of over 5,000 population reveal an average loss per person of 20 per cent. in weight. Losses of even 50 per cent. were not rare. The consequences of this "emaciation, caused especially through shortage of albuminous foods, were," according to an official report, (1) "reduction of physical and mental capacity of the individual; his will power and mental balance were gravely affected; (2) the reappearance of suppressed or controlled diseases; (3) rapid increase of other diseases; (4) irregularities in female functions and a general tendency towards infertility; (5) retarded recovery in all cases of illness; (6) marked increase in mortality and morbidity, especially among the aged and the youth of school age."

This German official confession of a breakdown in the mental capacity, will power, and mental balance — by which it is intended to say also moral balance — of the people is probably made as an excuse for many wrong things not explicitly

but implicitly admitted to have been committed during the war. It can hardly apply, however, to the soldiers themselves, who up to the last moment were at least fairly well fed, and for the most part of their service very well fed. It must, therefore, be offered as an excuse for the tolerance and often open approval of the people at home, that is, the nation as a whole, of the brutalities and crimes committed by the army in Belgium and France, and of the unmoral methods of the German rulers and statesmen.

But there were other peoples who, during the war, were living on a minimum life-sustaining ration, and who lost weight under it, and were exposed to all the consequences of malnutrition. With all the efforts of the Commission for Relief in Belgium, most of the ten million people in Occupied Belgium and France — especially France — were underfed through all the period of the war. Their food shortage began within a few months after the war began; Germany's food shortage did not begin to be serious until a year after theirs. Yet no one would have been less inclined to ascribe to the imprisoned and half-starved Belgian people a serious falling-off in

will power and mental capacity and moral balance, in one word, morale, than Governors-General von Bissing and von Falkenhausen and their staffs, to whom control of the Belgian people was intrusted. The underfed Belgians maintained a spirit through all their martyrdom, under all the discouragement of continuous bad news — carefully provided whether the real news was bad or good — and all the humiliation and privation of soup-lines and all the possible hopelessness of resistance that is beyond words fully to make known. On the other hand the underfed Germans had all the encouragement of the long period of German military successes, and of the continuously exploited assurances of ultimate success and an ensuing grand orgy of eating, drinking, and being merry at the expense of the Allies.

Yet, after all, it is probably true that the undernutrition of the Germans is in some measure responsible for some of their lack of mental and moral balance. Especially is it probable that the food shortage in the spring and summer of 1918, coupled with their sudden and profound disillusionment in the autumn, are responsible for much of their present hideous surrender of personal con-

trol. For the disorderly German of to-day is an amazing revelation to any one who knew the orderly German of yesterday.

As to the actual mortality in the civil population during the war, and ascribed by the authorities to the food shortage, it is declared that while the year 1914 showed no increase over 1913, there was in 1915 an increase of 9½ per cent. over 1913, in 1916, 14 per cent., in 1917, 32 per cent., and in 1918, 37 per cent. The great increase began in December, 1916, in the *Kohl-Rüben Zeit.* These percentages indicate a total number of deaths in 1915–1918 of nearly 800,000 more civilians — the deaths of two million soldiers are entirely excluded — than would have died if the death rate of 1913 had remained the annual average for the four war years. The increase was greatest proportionately in the age group 5 to 15 years (55 per cent. over the 1913 rate) and next in the 1 to 5 years group (49⅓ per cent. over 1913). Tabulated by disease causes, the most notable increase was from tuberculosis which, from a rate of 16 per 10,000 deaths in 1912 and 15 per 10,000 deaths in 1913, jumped to 18 per

10,000 in 1916, 25 in 1917, and 27½ in 1918, or in this last year of the war almost exactly double that of 1913.

In the preceding discussion of the food difficulties, no reference was made to the situation as regards the stimulating drinks, coffee, beer and wine, so abundantly used by the Germans in normal times, nor to tobacco which is the German's *sine qua non.* All these suffered a sea-change early in the war, which became more and more accented as the months passed. The coffee was not coffee; the tobacco not tobacco; and the beer became scarce and thin; German wines were still available, at great price, but French wines, certain kinds of which are much affected by the Germans for their alleged excellent effects on digestion, were altogether wanting after the stocks seized and stolen in the first months of the war had been used up.

Germany had annually imported about 181,000 tons of coffee before the war, or about three kilograms per person. When no more coffee came in, recourse was had to many kinds of substitutes. Browned grains were first used and were the most acceptable, but the grain shortage soon limited

their use. Other substitutes were made from dried and browned figs, sugar beet chips, turnips, "and other vegetable garbage," as a German official suggestively put it. All these substitutes lacked precisely that element, caffeine, that gives coffee its stimulating effect, which was an effect especially sought for by the underfed people.

The beer was gradually lessened in amount and alcoholic strength. As the demand on all the cereals fit for human consumption for use as food, chiefly in the form of bread, was so imperative, only very small quantities of them could be assigned to the brewers for beer-making. This quantity got to be as low as 5 per cent. of the pre-war quantity so used.

As for tobacco, all sorts of unsatisfactory substitutes were resorted to. Among them were hop flowers, the foliage of various trees, pine needles, and the leaves of a curiously large variety of other plants. I remember trying a certain one of these tobacco substitutes called *Kriegs-Mischung* with most uncomfortable results. As a matter of fact, not a little illness was caused by smoking certain of these substitutes, especially beech-leaves.

CHAPTER IV

OTHER INSIDE DIFFICULTIES DURING THE WAR

If the blockade and general war situation made the difficulties of food supply so serious that their steady cumulation, as time passed, tended plainly to inevitable disaster, no less can be said of the difficulties in the supply of raw materials for clothing and footwear and for the necessary industries, and the difficulties in coal supply and railway transportation. It was all very well to tell the world that paper shirts and skirts were quite as comfortable as woolen and cotton ones, and that wooden soles and near-leather uppers made shoes good enough for anybody, that copper was easily replaceable by mysterious new alloys abundantly available, and that the German coal supply was undiminished, and the railways functioning under the all-efficient military control with unusual perfection; but it was quite another thing to face actually living these lies indefinitely.

"American bluff" never dared such dizzy

heights as the Germans easily rose to in the latter years of the war. But bluff cannot too long substitute for reality, and this particular German bluff was simply another disappointing *Ersatz.*

When I first arrived in Belgium, in June, 1915, and was soon after assigned to the relief work in occupied France, I used to travel between Brussels and my post at Great Headquarters in Charleville on the German military trains of which several a day regularly made the five hours' journey. In the summer and autumn of 1915 these trains left Brussels (or Charleville) always promptly on the minute and arrived at destination equally promptly on the minute. They were composed of first-class corridor cars in excellent condition, clean, well-lighted and, when winter came, well-heated. There was a dining car and buffet car for the single meal or mid-meals drinking that the German officers enjoyed on the journey. Everything was efficient and comfortable.

But this did not last. As the months passed, the trains lessened in number, the coaches became jumpy as to wheels and ragged as to upholstering, the lights faded to sputtering and then into gloomy darkness, the dining car and the food and drink

disappeared, and instead of starting and arriving on schedule time there was delay in getting away, interruptions along the journey, and utter uncertainty as to time of arrival except that it would be hours after the scheduled moment. Yet these were military trains with preferential treatment as to equipment and personnel. What must have been the joys or comforts or reliability of civilian trains inside Germany?

But more convincing than personal impressions are the statistics now available. During the month of January, 1914, the railways of Prussia handled promptly and efficiently 219,000 loaded freight cars a day; in January, 1918, they handled neither promptly nor efficiently 146,700 freight cars, and in January of this year (1919) only 105,200, or slightly less than 50 per cent. of the pre-war number. As to passenger cars, no figures are available, but they would show far greater differences. To keep a nation alive and of the character of a going concern, it is much more important to move freight than passengers. In January, 1919, at which time the situation cannot have been much worse than in the last months before the Armistice, the passenger express trains

of Germany were but three per cent. of the pre-war normal; the total passenger trains but 35 per cent. of the normal, and the total freight trains but 42 per cent. of the normal.

The chief reason for the break-down in transportation was the scarcity of copper, tin, nickel, asbestos, cotton and rubber. The German locomotive has a copper fire-box. When copper was no longer available for this purpose, iron fire-boxes were put in when replacement was necessary. These could not stand the heat and went to pieces quickly. The lack of tin added to the lack of copper left available only lead, zinc, and aluminum with which to make friction metals. The best combinations which the Germans were able to perfect would stand neither the friction itself nor the generated heat well, nor did they lubricate properly. In addition, the only available lubricating oils themselves were of poor quality. The result was that bearings had to be often replaced in the journals and hot boxes were of daily occurrence on almost every moving train. The absence of cotton, asbestos, rubber and copper made itself keenly felt when it came to trying to make connections water- and steam-tight. None of the

substitutes for brass and asbestos stood up, and engines had to be frequently sent in for repair simply for leaks alone. The number of engines in the shops for these repairs in pre-war times was never beyond 13 per cent. of those being used; by the end of 1917 it had reached 33 per cent., and in January, 1919, it was 43 per cent.

Altogether, the deterioration of rolling stock and the difficulties of repair because of deficiency in materials and man-power must have been a tremendous handicap on the German effort to maintain even their minimum necessity of transportation in the latter period of the war.

The coal shortage further added to the general transportation difficulties. In addition it militated against the effectiveness of all war-time industry except actual government-controlled war industries themselves, for it was to these industries and to strictly military transportation that the available coal was first allocated. The lack of coal for other than the war industries had, too, a depressing and even seriously injurious effect on the people as a whole in their unheated homes, shops, offices, and public gathering places. The cold was especially felt in connection with the

lowered food ration and insufficient supply of warm clothing.

These discomforts of the people for lack of sufficient coal were real, but an examination of the available statistics of coal production in Germany during the four years of war reveals the interesting fact that there was practically no falling off in the number of tons of coal annually mined. For example, while the production in 1913 was 278,000,000 tons, the imports 18,000,000 tons, and the exports 44,000,000 tons, the corresponding figures for 1918 are, 275,000,000, 100,000, and 16,000,000. This last item of 16,000,000 tons exported in 1918 despite the urgent home need requires explanation. But there is a simple and sufficient one. Germany had to take that much coal out of the amount it could possibly have devoted to keeping its people more comfortable, in order to send it to contiguous neutrals in exchange for certain absolutely necessary supplies of neutral origin, an exchange which the Allied blockade could not wholly prevent.

Immediately after Armistice Day, however, when governmental internal control fell down and strikes were the order of the day, the coal pro-

duction went off rapidly. In January and February of this year the output of the great Ruhr district had fallen from the normal of 300,000 to 310,000 tons a day to quantities fluctuating between 150,000 to 260,000 tons a day. And the Silesian normal output of from 120,000 to 130,000 tons a day had fallen to from 32,000 to 60,000 tons a day. The official estimates for the whole of Germany put the production of bituminous coal in January and February, 1919, at from 50 per cent. to 60 per cent. of normal. And since that time the output percentage has fallen still lower.

It is interesting to note, as showing the close commercial and economic inter-relation among the adjacent countries of Europe that the people in Switzerland, Holland and Denmark were but little less cold and uncomfortable in the war winters, because of the coal situation in Germany, than the Germans themselves. For while Germany was able, or, better, really had to keep up a certain export of coal to these countries this export was much less than normal. The 16,000,000 tons sent out in 1918, and the 19,000,000 tons sent out in 1917 were much less than the pre-war normal as indicated by the figure of 44,000,000 tons

in 1913. Not all of the pre-war export went to those countries which in the war were known as the contiguous neutrals, but a large part did. Switzerland and Holland and Denmark gave up hot water baths and heated theaters and warm houses to about the same degree as Germany did. There is a pertinent significance in this fact to be taken into account in connection with all attempts to picture European conditions as they will be effected by a broken or continually restless and upheaving Germany.

The blockade and the large withdrawal of manpower from those native sources of raw materials which were not actually necessary for munitions and other strictly war supplies, combined to effect to an impressive degree a curtailment of the raw materials needed for German industry and of the substances commonly used by the people as everyday necessities.

The blockade almost entirely cut off the needed importations of cotton, wool, jute, rubber, silk, and the metals already referred to. This was especially true for the period 1917–1918; the blockade was not so effective before that time. It is reliably estimated that Germany managed to

get in, in the three years 1916–1918, not more than 2 per cent. of her normal importations of cotton. What an aching want of cotton this reveals.

Even as early as the fall of 1915 the cotton substitutes were making their appearance. My Headquarters escort officer and I stopped one day in that autumn at Montmedy, at that time the headquarters of the Crown Prince's army. In a hospital there I was shown a fluffy white substance which was being used as bandage and sponge material instead of cotton. It was made from the bark of pine trees. It was soft and absorbent and not a bad substitute for cotton in the particular use to which it was being put. But it was not something that, as my officer proudly put it, " had solved the cotton problem." It was only making it very clear that there was already, after one year of war, a serious cotton problem in Germany.

Germany obtained all through the war a certain amount of iron ore from Sweden. And her early seizure of the French Lorraine iron basin gave her an important source of steel supply. But little of this steel was available for any but strictly war purposes. In peace time the steel outturn of the

great Krupp factories for civil purposes is about 90 per cent.; during the war 90 per cent. of its outturn went for strictly war materials.

Scarcity of such a simple homely article as soap can work great discomfort and hardship; indeed it can be a serious menace to good health and to personal *morale*. In time of peace about 400,000 tons of the fats and oils available in Germany were used annually for technical purposes, above all for the manufacture of soap. Because of the blockade not only the greater part of the fat imports ceased, but it became necessary to use for human alimentation all kinds of domestic fats, in so far as they could be adapted by processes of refining, for that purpose. In November, 1915, it was forbidden to use for technical purposes any fats suitable for human consumption.

By the spring of 1916 the fats available for soap making were so scarce as to make controlled restriction and the use of soap substitutes necessary. While in pre-war times about ten kilograms of laundry and toilet soap had been used annually per person, a ration of only 250 grams a month of wash-powder, containing only 4 per cent. of fat, could be allowed for laundry use, and of one

cake of toilet soap of 50 grams consisting to the extent of about three-quarters of clay. In January, 1918, the wash-powder ration was reduced to 125 grams a month. "Many attempts to replace soap by fatless washing substances were made, but these preparations proved quite unsuitable for bodily use, and of a limited utility only for laundry purposes." The quotation is German official.

This last quoted sentence invites a few further remarks on the subject of *Ersätze* (substitutes), a word which all through the war was a word of boasting and now has become a special word of confession and whining. The truth is that the substitutes didn't substitute. The vaunted German science and ingenuity simply could not make the needed bricks without straw. Speaking of the shortage of leather and textiles for clothing, the German authorities admit to-day that, despite all attempts, "we have not succeeded up to the present day (January, 1919) in supplying the civil population with a single really useful substitute [for leather or textiles]. The paper textures that appeared on the market were, without counting their high prices, a disappointment."

And the testimony, both official and unofficial

expert, is the same with regard to substitutes for the usual foods and metals, as well as for leather and the textiles. Some of these were useless when made; others more usable cost so much in time, materials, and labor as to be unpracticable. The leading scientific men of Germany with whom we talked admitted this; the people in the street admitted it with less hesitation and in terms of no dubiety. The number of these substitutes ran into the thousands; they turn out to have been practically that many disappointments.

CHAPTER V

HOW THE PEOPLE WERE DECEIVED

THESE revelations of the actual internal difficulties of Germany during the war help explain why imperial Germany broke. That the actual collapse was immediately the result of the decisive military victories of the Allies in the late summer and autumn of 1918, should not prevent us from recognizing that the break-down behind the lines, the internal collapse which would itself have ended the war even in the face of a purely military stalemate, was certain to come in the spring of 1919. Despite Under Secretary of State von Braun's declaration to us in February that the collapse of Germany was caused solely, or chiefly, by the "illegal, inhuman, monstrous blockade"— how monstrous, incredible, illegal and inhuman things are when the other fellow is doing them! — he knows that this is not true. Germany could have staggered on until her 1918 harvest was used up, and, with her armies holding in the west, she would

have done it; although in fact it would have been only a hopeless staggering, and her few informed people knew it. But the end really came by a white flag from the General Staff, not the general public. The people were still holding out, amazing, in the light of what we now know, as it is.

Indeed it is no less than a wonder that Germany was able to go on for as long as she did. And Germany herself now wonders how she was able to do it. The explanation is chiefly one of psychology, of the official and the self-deception of nearly a whole people, and of an almost superhuman endurance of an almost impossible situation on the basis of the promise, and a blind faith in this promise, of an early cessation of the situation and a complete compensation for the sufferings endured. A few Germans saw some time before the break, the reality of things and the certain disaster that impended from this reality. The principal organic chemist, the principal statistician and the principal agricultural expert of Germany told Dr. Taylor and me that they knew, a year before the end, that Germany was doomed. But these wise Germans were few and they had to keep silent. The two or three who did try to

speak up either got quickly out of the country, or into prison. If there was freedom of anything in Germany during the war, it was not freedom of speech.

One of the most revealing books concerning the internal situation in Germany during the war time is Kurt Muehsam's "*Wie Wir Belogen Wurden,*" a fully documented account of "the official deception of the German people" by means of the press control. The book was published in Munich as soon after the Armistice as it could be put through the press. It is a book of damning revelation of German official lying, German official stupidity and German official culpable ignorance of facts, and, more important, of the significance of facts known. It helps reveal the singularly artificial character of the control of the German nation by the rulers of Germany, a control to which, nevertheless, the mass of the people from ignorant peasants to most erudite of professors submitted tamely for amazingly long.

Muehsam lays bare by actual citation and quotation the whole censor system, absurd in its attempt to controvert all truth, criminal in its success of hiding sufficient truth to wreck the nation.

It was a system that went far beyond saying what truth might not be printed, for it included saying what untruth should be told.

For example, to show its attitude towards a single critically important matter, on May 17, 1918, the official news agency gave out for publication in all the newspapers a statement that "the number of American fighting troops in France is, according to reliable official information, to be estimated at about ten divisions — only four of these are at the front. The total of all those back of the lines as well as in them is at the most from 150,000 to 200,000 men. Press notices concerning these facts should state, therefore, that America has not been able to meet its expectations in the way of sending troops, and the earlier estimates of the German General Staff as to what America could do have proved to be true. However, in order not to let the enemy know how well informed we are, the actual figures given above should under no circumstances be mentioned!"

Now as a matter of fact there were at the time this was given out to the German press nearly one million American troops in France. Was the

General Staff just lying or was it just ignorant of the facts? The latter supposition is almost inconceivable. In any event the giving out of this false information to the German people was both stupid and criminal.

In a remarkable "Censor Book" issued in March, 1917, general instructions including explicit prohibitions and recommendations were given concerning the press treatment of a long series of subjects arranged alphabetically and running all the way from "*Aalandfrage*" to "*Zensurmassnahmen.*" These presumably permanent instructions were added to a thousandfold by the special instructions issued constantly by a so-called "*Press Conferenz,*" which, beginning in 1914 with weekly sittings, soon became an almost continuously sitting institution, and in addition by other confidential detailed instructions with regard to particular matters of the minute which were constantly issued by no less than a score of separate official bureaus and war offices.

The Censor Book, under the head "*Lebensmittel,*" forbade the publication of any declarations or suppositions that "our economic holding out may not be possible." It also forbade the

comic papers from making the food shortage the subject of jests.

Under "*Zensurmassnahmen*" it was forbidden to print any news concerning any measures taken to enforce the censorship! In a word, in the face of, and by means of what was notoriously the most radical and criminal censorship ever instituted it was attempted to cover up the fact of any censorship at all.

On September 22, 1914, just after the first battle of the Marne, the "*Press Conferenz*" gave out to the newspapers and the people of Germany the following announcement:

"The general military situation in the West is good. No retreat or backward push has taken place as a result of any tactical advantage of the enemy. Our movements were entirely of strategic nature for the preparation of new successes and were not forced by the enemy."

On the next day this general thesis was repeated with certain interesting additions — amazingly absurd additions, as a matter of fact — one of them being a prohibition to the press to say anything about the backward movement of the German troops "in order that the enemy may be left

in his present embarrassing great uncertainty" about these movements!

When the Luxburg "*Versenkt ohne Spur*" affair was a few days old, the worried Berlin Foreign Office issued a rather petulant special instruction to the press to the effect that although the Entente was continuing to publish new telegrams the Foreign Office wished all references to the Luxburg affair to "disappear from the German press once and for all." On March 16, 1917, the press was given the statement that the injuries to the German ships in American harbors had been successfully accomplished. "For example, the giant steamer *Vaterland* had been made completely unusable for America." On July 27, 1917, the press was notified that it should refer to Russia as still a brave antagonist. "The successes of our troops are much depreciated if our press continues to speak of the Russian Army as without strength or power of resistance"; which was exactly its condition at this time.

On August 29, 1918, a long instruction to the press was issued announcing the retirement from the Marne for ten to twelve kilometers of Boehn's Army, but forbidding any immediate publication

of the fact. The news was told the press so that preparation could be made " if the Entente should announce this retreat as a great success, as was probable," to meet " the urgent necessity through the press of creating a proper understanding and of quieting the public." It was further stated to the press that the Marne operations had resulted in a failure both on the German and Entente sides to carry out the planned movements but " in any discussion of the situation the failure on the German side is not to be mentioned while that of the Entente is to be strongly brought out and emphasized."

But we cannot dig farther into this mine of decaying " blood and iron." The odor is too repellent. This is not simply censorship; it is premeditated official deception of a whole people. The German authorities cannot have understood the great risk in it. They seemed to have believed that if they could carry on for the day, the morrow could be met when it came.

We know censorship, and do not like it; and so do the English and the French people know it and dislike it. One country may make use of it more than another. But there is more than a

quantitative difference between the censorships we know and this German one; there is a qualitative difference. One country may not allow its newspapers to print the enemy *communiques*. The German newspapers had to print them with additions or subtractions that made them tell, as of enemy origin, the lies that the German authorities wished to tell their people. The official deception of the German people by the German rulers through all the long war agony was not the least of the crimes of imperial Germany, nor was it the least of the means whereby the German nation was led to ruin.

CHAPTER VI

WHAT THE GERMANS THOUGHT DURING THE WAR AND ARMISTICE

THE press is reputed to be the voice of the people, and many of us read the German newspapers assiduously through the war and armistice period in the hope of learning just what the German people were thinking and saying. But Muehsam has shown us that during the war period, at least, it was their masters' voice, not their own, that came from the printing presses. It was in truth a gramaphone we were hearing reading out from the prepared records the dictations of General Staff, Foreign Office, *Press Conferenz*, and all the rest. So despite an occasional revelation in *Die Zukunft, Berliner Tageblatt, Leipziger Volkstimme, Münchner Post,* and similar socialist or liberal journals, which preferred to accept an occasional suppression rather than be completely tongue-tied as regards truth-speaking, we learned little from the German press of what the German

people were thinking or were saying among themselves in whispers.

But there were a few Americans in such situations as enabled them to hear the actual voices of some of the German people. Mr. Gerard in Berlin and Mr. Whitlock in occupied Brussels heard something of what the government officials had to say in moments when they were not too consciously speaking to the public, and I had some unusual opportunities at Great Headquarters in 1915 and 1916 to hear an occasional straight word from the staff officers with whom I necessarily came into contact. Also I heard occasionally some even straighter words from the orderlies of these officers and from petty officers and soldiers at the Headquarters. One thing was noticeable; the speech of the orderlies and soldiers while in the earlier months of the war as vainglorious as that of the officers, grew to be different, even very different.

Their letters from home made impressions on them that their simple minds could not but reflect. And these impressions did not make for happiness or boasting. They learned that things were going badly at home; that their wives and children

were suffering even though no foreign foe was burning their houses, looting their shops, possessing their fields or outraging their women. And these orderlies and soldiers, many of them at least, were not too long in understanding that while the army was winning victories, Germany was not winning the war, certainly not, at least, with the rapidity that had been assured them.

I remember one old *Landsturmer* who, in his capacity of guard at a little bridge, stopped my motor to examine my pass. He had just heard of the break in diplomatic relations between Germany and America, and misunderstood it to be the American declaration of war.

"So," he grunted, "you are going to fight us. Well, I'm glad. You will win, and that will end it. We want it to end."

During 1915 every one at Headquarters — except the unfortunate French villagers of the town and the neutral Americans of the Relief Commission — was radiant and boastful. It was taking a little more time and exertion to make the winning than had been counted on, but victory was certain; it was almost in sight. And this feeling lasted until the first of July, 1916. The officers

I had to be with were almost unendurable in their high spirits, their strutting and boasting, their insolent references to America's hold-off policy — easily explained by our cowardice and selfishness. But one day in the first week of July, 1916, on a trip of inspection of the relief work, on which another American of the Relief Commission and myself were escorted by three German officers of the Headquarters Staff, we pushed as far west as Coucy le Château where we opened our luncheon baskets at the foot of the noble tower of the old château ruins. They were not the utter ruins, it may be remarked in parentheses, that they are now.

As we munched our war-bread and *Leberwurst* we heard the constant rumble of a heavy cannonading along the front to our west. It even interrupted our conversation. That is, the officers occasionally and rather nervously checked themselves in mid-sentence to glance at each other and mutter, "Heavy, unusually heavy; the damned English are getting more wasteful." Talk about the history of the château and the German victories in the east faded away. They were too much interested in the significant rumble.

So after luncheon we climbed the long spiral stair in the tower wall to the summit to see what we could of what was going on. We had a most extended panorama of the West Front all the way from Noyon to Soissons. All along this line there was the smoke of bursting heavy shells; it was really a bombardment on a grand scale; an enormous quantity of shell was being hurled into the German lines by hundreds of heavy cannon. If it were not the prelude of an extensive serious offensive, it was at any rate a proof that the Allies had finally succeeded in so developing their munitions output that they could play with equal extravagance the German game of artillery preparation and offensive.

Our officers did not like the looks of it. They became gloomy, grouchy. We made the long journey back to Headquarters mostly in silence. And that evening at dinner and after when the news of what was really going on at the front had come in by radio and telegraph and telephone, for there was much of it, they began whining. "How can we expect to win with America furnishing the Allies enormous quantities of munitions? What can we do with all the world against

us? Why is this universal hate of Germany?" It was an amazing change from the boasting of the day and days before. And it all came from the first day's artillery preparation for the first Somme offensive — from that and from the yellow streak that the buttoned-up field-gray blouses had up to now concealed from view.

After July, 1916, the tide of war ebbed and flowed, and as it changed the German officers boasted or whined. When the fateful day in 1917 came on which America broke off diplomatic relations with Germany, the German General Staff had a shock. It was very angry; angry with America and angry with "the stupid pigs" of statesmen and diplomats in Berlin who had allowed matters to come to such a pass. But they had certain hopes. Baron von der Lancken, political head of von Bissing's government of Belgium, said to me on the afternoon of my last day in Brussels — it was in the middle of March three weeks before we were at war with Germany: "This is a sad state of affairs; we should never have allowed it to come about. Of course, it means war. But I cannot believe that there will ever be such feeling or such war between America

and Germany as exists between England and Germany. We may, indeed, may we not, hope for a more platonic war?"

There is no doubt that the Germans believed we should never really enter the war against them. We had waited so long; they had already done so many things to us that Germany would never have tolerated having us do to them that they had put us down as too cowardly and selfish to spend lives and money in war against them. We were safe over there across the ocean. And we were making money in provisioning the Allies with food and material. The German General Staff and Berlin were sure we would never come in, and the German people were sure of it because they were told so over and over again by the men who knew.

And then after we were in they were told over and over again that we would not count. The instructions to the German press about our troop landings, quoted in the last chapter, are examples of this. At first the General Staff really believed that we would not count seriously; they relied on our unpreparedness, our lack of a trained army, and the enormous difficulty, even with free use of

the ocean, of carrying overseas a sufficiently large force with continuing necessities in the way of food and munitions in great quantity; and then there was the increased difficulty of doing this in face of submarine attack to count on; and finally they were sure that even if we were able to get over at all we could not do it in time to save the situation.

But first the General Staff, and then, gradually and despite all attempts to prevent it, the people, learned the disturbing news of the American coming to France. From the German soldiers on the West Front who began to meet American soldiers all up and down the line and to learn by sad experience their eagerness and unmistakable capacity for fighting, the news got back to the people. And the realization of what this American coming really meant, and the bitterness at the deception that had covered it up were not conducive to strengthening the hold on the people, in these increasingly difficult days, of the German court and military rulers.

As I have said, we were told in Berlin in February of this year by three of the best known scientific men of Germany that they knew long before

the break-down came that it was inevitable. When we asked these men why they had not cried this aloud to the people, so as to save further bloodshed and national exhaustion, they said simply: "We should not have been heard. At first the people would not have believed us, and before we could make them believe we should have disappeared, either in prison or as refugees forced to escape from the country. Remember Nicolai and Forster and Muehlon."

It is true that Germany was no place in 1917 and 1918 for truth-telling. Muehlon, the ex-director of Krupp's, had fled to Switzerland for speaking out some unpalatable truths. We saw him in Berne a few weeks after the Armistice. He was interesting himself in the possibility of obtaining food relief for Germany, and had a moving tale to tell of the serious situation. He saw the food control disappearing and at the same time the food stocks also going. Spring would bring the people face to face with starvation. But even as he revealed the desperate brokenness of Germany, and asked for help, he flashed out now and then with characteristic German insolence, a boast or a challenge.

"You must be careful," he declared; "you must not treat Germany too hard; you cannot push us too far. The world must reckon with Germany's intrinsic greatness; it must not overlook the importance of her *Kultur,* her science and her art; the world will always need Germany."

And then with equally characteristic naïveté and utter lack of comprehension of the realities external to himself and Germany he asked — and this only a month after the bloody fighting in the Argonne — if we did not think it an auspicious time to institute a propaganda among the children of America to collect funds for the feeding of the children of Germany, as we of the C.R.B. had done so successfully in earlier days for Belgium!

That is one of the difficult things in understanding the thoughts and talk of the people and of the rulers of Germany since the end of the fighting period. They themselves do not understand the thoughts of other peoples about Germany and German ways. And hence German thinking and expression since Armistice Day are based on accepted premises concerning their own position and

concerning our position that we cannot understand as acceptable.

We believe that Germany was beaten in a military way and that her military leaders so fully recognized this as to lead them to know that the only means of saving their armies from complete slaughter or complete surrender as prisoners was to ask for an armistice; which was, in effect, an acknowledgment of defeat but an escape from the full consequences of defeat. But the German people as a whole do not by any means share this belief.

Returning from Berlin to Paris in February I found myself alone in a compartment on the train from Cologne to Spa with a German locomotive engineer on his way to help advise the German armistice commission about the delivery of railway engines and cars to the Allies. He was an unusually intelligent man, or seemed so, and was very frank in his talk.

We were discussing the German revolution. He agreed that it was a good thing for Germany; it had to come; the old régime had to go; the time had certainly come for it to go.

" But," he added, " what a pity they didn't put off the revolution a little longer."

"Why?" I asked.

"Why, because we should have won the war soon, and then we should have been in so much better shape. You know, we were not beaten in a military way. It was just our break-down behind the lines."

And he then, unintentionally, gave some proof of the conditions "behind the lines," when he paid ten marks to a passing Scots soldier for a cake of Sunlight soap. The occupying troops along the Rhine can pay many bills with a few bars of soap. That is one thing the blockade did.

But the idea that Germany was not beaten by arms is not limited to the man in the street. In a speech before the National Assembly at Weimar, a Minister of the Majority Socialist government was interrupted by clamorous approval when he declared: "We were not beaten; we gave up."

For the sake of stopping further bloodshed in Europe, and to end the privation and suffering of the civil population of Germany, the unbeaten army of Germany "gave up"!

So all through the armistice period while the German people knew that they were badly broken, that their industries were almost at a standstill,

that they had not enough food to eat, with a prospect of having less before their 1919 harvest came in, that their rail transportation was so miserably insufficient that a simple journey from Berlin to Munich was to be looked on as an undertaking of such difficulty and discomfort as to be avoided unless absolutely necessary, that their coal supply was so reduced that they must get on with little heat and light, that they must wear paper clothing and wooden shoes, and that for all of this there could be no relief except by the benevolence of their enemies or by the fear of these enemies that a too-miserable Germany might be a danger to the stability of their own governments — despite all this, the German people would not accept the knowledge that their armies had been beaten by the armies of the Entente. Their soldiers had stopped fighting for reasons of discretion but they had come home unconquered. It required the hard terms of armistice and peace that followed and annihilated these armies within the very heart of their untouched country to shake the confidence of the Germans in their delusion.

CHAPTER VII

GERMANY NOW AND TO-MORROW

THE peace has come! Seven months have passed since Armistice Day. The material conditions of Germany have not changed much in this time; certainly they have not changed much for the better. Some food has gone into the country — and has been eaten as rapidly as it arrived. Some commercial agents of various countries, enemy as well as neutral, have arrived, but the arrangements with them are, at best, tentative. The outcome of these arrangements depends on various variables, the final influence of any one of which can only be guessed at now. The commercial blockade has been maintained; the slight relaxation of it has only been for the sake of keeping the people alive, not for the sake of beginning Germany's industrial rehabilitation. The outstanding interest and activity of the seven months since last November have been political; struggle for and against the government set up by the

Revolution; intriguing and fighting by Independent Socialists and Spartacists; watchful waiting and subterranean mining by Royalists and reactionaries; thoughtful weighing of advantages and chances by Separatists in Bavaria and the Rhineland and elsewhere. There has been little accomplished along lines other than political. Indeed, under the circumstances, with the peace settlement always hanging fire, there could be little. Only politics can be played to much advantage in such a situation. So politics — and finding something to eat — have been the German preoccupations of the last half year.

But it is of importance to us, and even more to that part of the world nearer Germany, to know all that can be known of Germany's actual material condition to-day. We need to know this to know what Germany can do and to guess at what she is really going to do to-morrow. For despite all the drastic conditions of the Versailles peace Germany is not dismembered, not extinguished. She is a living nation of sixty million people with a tradition and habit of hard work, of international commercial relations, of highly developed industry based on scientific method, attention to

detail and disregard of morals; in a word, bent on success as an industrial and commercial competitor of other nations.

German business men and commercial experts, between expressions of horror, indignation and profanity concerning the peace requirements, have taken pen in hand to write reassuring articles in Berlin and Frankfort newspapers about Germany's business opportunities in the future. Although Germany has not won political domination of Eastern Europe she can still count on commercial domination of it, say these German business men. Her goods and her trade are as essential to Poland and Russia and the Balkans as they ever were, or as they could ever be even with political control over these countries. These peoples have to have Germany; let us get the peace and let them get their boundaries fixed and their governments going, and then we can go after their business. We may have lost the war for the ownership of the East, but we have not lost our opportunity for commercial domination of it. The countries and the backward peoples are still there, these pastoral and agricultural folk who have to get their manufactured things and

fertilizers and dyes and medicines and all the rest from outside their boundaries. They have to have Germany just as much as, and perhaps more than, ever. That is the kind of comfort in these sore hours of surprise, dismay, indignation and vituperation, that not a few German traders have been able to find.

Well, it is encouraging comfort for us, too. For we prefer to see Germany planning commercial conquest rather than military conquest. We do not like fighting so much, despite our taste of success in it, that we want to go at it again soon. And Germany planning to trade with the Balkans is not disquieting to us; and ought not to be for anybody else. Only let Germany stick to trade this time — and forget Berlin to Bagdad.

In the meantime what is Germany's situation at this time of making a new beginning with her industry and commerce? Where does she stand after five years of blockade and commercial isolation?

At the time of the outbreak of the war Germany had, as all the world knows, a great and rapidly growing international commerce. She was, it seemed, well on the way to outstrip all

competitors. Why did she attempt a world conquest by war when she had a world conquest by commerce apparently certain? I used to ask this question at Great Headquarters. The answer I got was the shallow clever one: "Exactly; that proves, doesn't it, that it was not we who started the war or wanted war. We were already winning over France and England in the race for world-power. Why should we risk the chance of war?"

Echo murmurs, "Why?"

Perhaps no one, not even those Germans who did want war and compelled war, can answer satisfactorily. Perhaps the very taste of successful conquest by commerce was like the rank savor of warm blood to the carnivore, exciting the appetite. Perhaps conquest by commerce, swiftly as it was really moving, seemed irritatingly slow compared to the possibilities of possession by war. Perhaps it is all to be referred for answer to that convenient escape from answer, the extraordinary, the unfathomable German psychology.

At any rate, whether we, or Germany, can answer this conundrum, or not, our other queries

touching the actual situation which faces Germany about to begin again the long climb uphill, and the probabilities of her manner and rate of ascent, are capable of more promising consideration. We may be able to find answers to these queries that will have some degree of correctness, because there are certain ascertainable facts to start from.

In the first place Germany's food outlook for the coming harvest year must be considered, as daily bread is requisite for daily toil, whether in factory or counting house, in shop or government bureau; or, indeed, on the very farm itself where the food is produced.

The outlook for this year's grain crop is not bad. It is perhaps not as good as it was earlier in the summer, for there was bad weather in May, but if there is 85 per cent. of a normal crop — and the German authorities insist that nothing better than that can be hoped for because of the lessened acreage planted, the lessened man-power available and the lack of fertilizers — it would not require an impossibly large importation of grain and fats, to maintain a fairly sufficient working ration for all the people through all the coming

year. The German food controller, Schmidt, thinks that, with any sort of effective government in the saddle, he can lay his hands on at least two-thirds of the crop, for official rationing to the people; the other third will partly be fed to animals by the farmers, and partly escape into the hands of the illegal food-trade, the *Schleichhandel.* But even thus out of control it will, at least, find its way into the mouths of men and stock.

If a million, or better one and a half million tons of bread grains (wheat and rye) can be imported — and with America's enormous wheat crop to draw on, plus what is available from Argentina and Australia that ought to be easily possible — a sufficient, if not extravagant, bread ration can be assured.

It is not so promising as to potatoes. Posen has been the greatest potato-producing part of Germany, but Posen has a new name now — or rather an old one restored. It is Posnania again; Polish Posnania. This means a distinct lessening of the German potato supply, although it may well be that Poland can sell some of its Posnanian potatoes to the German government — at a price.

This matter of price, not only of potatoes, but of bread and meat, of all food, indeed, is going to be one of the looming subjects of difficulty and discussion among all the German people all through the coming year, as where is it not a looming subject. The fixed price for wheat to be paid the German producer has been, during the past year, but little over a dollar a bushel. But with a fixed, or, rather, minimum price for American wheat of more than two dollars a bushel on the farm, and with an as yet indeterminate, but certainly pretty serious cost of transportation from Iowa to Hamburg, how is the German government going to hold the German farmer down to receiving but a dollar for his wheat and rye, when it is paying two or three times as much for the necessary importations. If they do not pay the German farmers more these farmers will not be very enthusiastic about planting next spring; if they do pay them more the price of bread to the factory workman is going to be a simple, but effective, argument for Bolshevism.

The meat supply is bound to be low; Germany has had no concentrated feeds to fatten her animals, although there is forage enough from this

year's crop to carry the animals alive through the winter. The German herds have not been greatly reduced, the reduction being nothing like, for example, that of the French herds, but the milch cattle are giving only about one-half the normal milk yield; this because of lack of concentrates. However, the opening of the North and Baltic Seas again to the German fishermen will help out in the meat difficulty, and the ability to trade freely with Denmark and Holland will help out in the line of dairy products. Germany will have vegetables and fruits enough to get along with, and her native sugar production will be sufficient to provide a reasonable ration, even though it will take more than next year to get back to the old exporting basis.

Altogether, Germany, with its ports open to importations and with a financial arrangement sufficiently generous on the part of foreign exporters, ought to be on a sufficiently sound food basis to begin its uphill climb without facing the starvation specter whose presence would mean no climbing at all.

But food is only the beginning. One cannot work without food, but neither can one without

raw materials to work with, equipped factories to work in, men to do the work, and markets for the output. What is the present situation in Germany as regards these conditions?

Germany's war chest at the beginning of the war contained more than money. There was in it a good supply of the raw materials of war, such as copper, nickel, tin, asbestos, rubber, and cotton, and the other things needful for munitions and transportation which were not native to the country. And in the first years of the war, before the blockade was really effective, more of these materials were imported. In 1915 Germany was able to get in nearly one-half of her usual pre-war annual importation of cotton. There were also certain reserve stocks of native raw materials, so that any lessening of production because of a heavy diversion of man-power to the army would not handicap the needs of the war-lords.

But as the war ran on, longer, much longer, than the General Staff had ever counted on, these accumulations were exhausted. Then came the days of strenuous attempts to smuggle in every least bit of needed metal, cotton, wool and rubber, of wholesale systematized stripping of the oc-

cupied territories even to name-plates from the doors and wool from the mattresses, of substitute alloys and pine bark "cotton." All industrial production for export stopped, of course, at the very beginning of the war, and production for home use was made over into production for war use. Before the war Krupp's steel output was over 90 per cent. for civilian purposes; in 1917 it was over 90 per cent. for war purposes. The great dye factories became instantly, and with almost no interruption of work, factories for high explosives. German industry was gradually all concentrated on meeting the one crying need: war supplies. German raw materials were all used, and used up, to produce things of destruction, which were themselves destroyed in destroying.

The result of all this was to leave Germany, when the end of the war came, with a certain amount of manufactured war supplies on hand, a small amount of native raw materials waiting to be converted into more war supplies, and almost no stocks of supplies for civilian use. As to stocks of manufactured articles for export — which is a matter the business men of other countries are much interested in and concerning which many

guesses have been made — it is not easy, perhaps it is impossible, to speak with certainty. But one may be pretty confident that all talk of Germany's being prepared, the minute the blockade is released, to dump large quantities of her special products such as dye-stuffs, chemicals, scientific instruments, potash, and the rest, on to the markets of the world is idle talk. There were probably considerable stocks of some of these things on hand when the war began but many of them were materials which could be made use of for war purposes by Germany herself; and these were certainly used. And the labor, coal and raw material difficulties certainly permitted no extensive manufacture during the Armistice period.

However, with the demand for war supplies at an end, and with importation of raw materials again possible Germany can turn her attention — all of it not required to be concentrated on internal political, financial and social problems — to beginning to build up her industries for the production of civilian articles for home need and for export. This attention must first be directed to the re-conversion of her converted factories. The factories for high explosives can easily become

factories for dye-stuffs and chemicals again; Krupp's can reverse the percentage of its steel output from 90 per cent. war to 90 per cent. civilian purposes. Some other factories cannot be so quickly put back into peace-time work.

But the re-conversion of factories is perhaps the least of the difficulties to be met. Two others especially are of great importance.

There is a scarcity of coal — although there need not be a scarcity for any particular industry if the government decides to cut somewhere else. Some coal must be exported in exchange for certain indispensable imports, as, for example, to Switzerland, Holland and Denmark for food. Also what coal there is has become very expensive. The cost of coal per ton has risen about 300 per cent., imposing a great increase in the cost of manufacture.

There is a scarcity of skilled labor. The General Staff kept skilled labor out of the army as long as it could but before the end came much of it had to be enrolled, and many of the men were killed or mutilated. In addition the reconstruction work in Belgium and France, demanded by the treaty, will keep much German labor busy

for a long time. What there is left for the German factories will have to be paid for at two to three times the pre-war rate; and it will return a much lessened output than in the good old days of nine and ten hours — they are eight-hour days now — and of a high industrial morale. That morale is, certainly for the moment, gone.

Finally there are the great political and economic changes to take into account; the changes already made, the changes that are still to come. These changes affect both labor and capital. They give labor a control it has not had before which will be exercised in directions opposed to the old exploitation of man-power in manufacturing. And they make capital afraid. Initiative under these risks will be lessened; there will be a reduction of working capital to the lowest amount possible; fears of sequestration will keep capital out of sight; capital will have a disproportionate share of the war-debt to pay; there will be "socialization" of certain industries, with its doubtful effect on efficiency.

But Germany will undoubtedly return to work; she must, or literally fall to pieces. Business will undoubtedly try to resume its old methods of gain-

ing and dominating foreign markets, but to do this will it have that powerful government support that the old régime gave it, and will it not need exactly this kind of support more than ever before?

Altogether, to my thinking, fears of a quick resumption of German industrial and commercial dominance in world trade seem to me only fears of the thoughtless mind, the mind that does not take new circumstances into account but works in a groove creased by experience of days and conditions that are gone and kept open by memories of a time that is past. On the other hand hopes of a less dangerous but a reasonable and needed resuming of German industry will have every chance of realization if the world outside Germany is fairly generous as to credit, and the world inside Germany finds soon some political stability.

In all discussions of the future of Germany, which attempt to point out probabilities based on premises of actual material conditions, one constantly meets a certain kind of argument in rebuttal which is triumphantly summed up in the expression: "You can't tell me; I know Germans."

The idea is that the future of Germany will be determined by Germans and not by material facts, not by conditions imposed by the rest of the world or by the presence or absence of raw materials and coal, and labor, and money, or by any other hard and fast material circumstances. And the idea is, further, that Germans will always behave as we have seen them behave. It is on the basis of this behavior that we claim that we know them.

But does, indeed, anybody really "know Germans." Because Germans are human beings like ourselves and because they read the same history, study the same mathematics and science and philosophy, speak a language that we can acquire, enjoy the same music and pictures, live, in a word, as we live, can we, from the experience of knowing ourselves, know Germans? We have, most of us, certainly decided that the Germans, from the experience of knowing themselves, certainly do not know other people. Their behavior during the war has shown that they did not know English, Belgians or Americans. But whether this behavior, as we have seen it with horror and dismay, is the only thing we are to take into account

in our attempt to prophesy as to German future doing and becoming seems to me very doubtful.

The world needs a better knowledge of human biology; a more developed science of the human species. We need to know much more of the possible influence of environment and education in determining the psychology and behavior of a given human group. Because we are all of the same species must all those of us with relatively equal endowment of brain and nervous system feel and think essentially alike? And if we do not — as of course we really do not — must that prove a fundamental distinction among us as to stock and biological inheritance? Or can a varying intensive type of environment and education produce so radical a differentiation among us, among groups of men of similar basic make-up, that we can come to react very differently to the same stimulus, and hence be, for the practical purposes of living and associating with each other, very different kinds of creatures?

My own experience in the last four years has done much to make me over from a convinced believer in the dominating influence of heredity over

environment and education in determining human behavior and moral makeup into a believer in the great possibilities of the modifying effect of environmental conditions. Germans are not so different from Englishmen and Americans by stock, that is, by inheritance; but they have been made different by education, using the word in its larger biological sense. And if this is true there is hope that they may be changed again if their education is sufficiently changed; that if their environment becomes strongly democratic and democratizing they may in time become of the democratic faith.

This is not to say that the adoption of a form of democratic government necessarily means the acquirement of the democratic faith. Democracy is more a matter of education, of the acquirement of an attitude, of a state of mind and heart, the possession of a feeling of good will and generosity, a willingness to give every man and every group of men a fair chance in both internal and external relations, and a gladness to see all mankind move forward and upward. It means less class feeling and more human feeling; it is altruism, not egoism. It involves internationalism,

but not simply the internationalism of the proletariat.

Can Germans come to this? Not if human nature is immutable. But it is not. The present human nature of the Germans is not necessarily a human nature they have always had. Indeed it is certain that it is not. It was much worse once, in times very far back, than it is now; and in times not so far back it was better than it is now. The study of the pre-history of the Germans and of the rest of the Europeans — of all the human race, for that matter,— shows that we were at one time, in the course of human evolution, in a stage literally but little removed from a truly brute condition. We were simply "animal among animals." But by the nature of our physical evolution, which gave us speech and the possibility of recording our traditions, and gave us a special development of mind rather than better claws and teeth with which to carry on our struggle for existence, our general course of evolution diverged importantly from that of the other great animals in that it moved toward development on a basis of the mutual aid principle rather than the mutual struggle principle. We

found a genuine biologic advantage in altruism, just as the social insects, the ants and bees, most successful of insect types, found it.

Our nature changed; it became more and more what we now recognize by the phrase human nature as contrasted with brute nature. And it changed rapidly; rapidly, that is, from the biological point of view.

But the important element which has made possible the immense hastening of this change of nature, of mental and moral makeup, has been the element of environment and education, rather than that of pure natural selection. In our social evolution we have been able to hold fast, by virtue of speech and writing, to steps which are not actually a part of our natural evolution. We have a social or traditional inheritance as well as a physical inheritance. And it is by conscious modification of our environment and education that we can determine the character of this all-important influence on our lives.

The Germans have been made what most of them are to-day by a perverted and brutalizing education. They were taught that human evolution is chiefly determined by crass and cruel nat-

ural selection; that the struggle for existence among human groups is the complete analogue of this struggle among the brute groups. The strongest in fighting are the fittest to live.

Well, if that is so — and it is not; but if it is — what do the Germans think to-day about the fitness and value of their type of cultural development? Is it not, on the very basis of their own perverted reading of the factors of evolution, proved to be an unfit type? I remember how often my old friend, the university professor of biology on the German General Staff at Charleville used to say: "We must inevitably win this war for we are biologically right; we are the fittest to live, and hence nature is with us. That group which can dominate other groups is the chosen of evolution. It should struggle with other groups and it should win over them and dominate them for the sake of the evolutionary advance of the human race."

Well, does he hold fast to that now? If so let him, and the others who believe with him, tell the German people that the American, English, French type of civilization, of social organization, of democracy, of human nature, is the

right one, the one proven best by biological law. For it happens to have won in the struggle.

But whether these men accept the war's verdict, or not, as the verdict of natural law, there will be plenty of less scientifically-informed, less sophisticated but more common-sensible Germans who will see in the debacle of Germany's autocracy and militarism the need and the opportunity of changing the type of German education, of changing the environment of Germany's new generation to one more in keeping with the world's present stage of social evolution. It is the stage of democracy; German human nature can be changed to fit in with it. We may not "know Germans," but we do know something about human beings in general, and Germans are, after all, of that biological category. And human beings can change, and change fairly rapidly, their consciously controlled environment, and hence the character of their social evolution.

There are still sixty million Germans in Germany: a human group of great potentiality. All they need is the proper education; the kind of environment that the world has come to understand as the best for right influence on human

evolution. Instead of carrying their old type of social organization and political attitude to all the rest of the world and imposing it on the rest of the world by force, they have now for their own sake and the sake of human progress to accept another type. I believe that, with time, they will see this and do it. But it will not be done in a day.

THE END

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA